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**COOPERATIVE EXTENSION WORK IN AGRICULTURE AND HOME ECONOMICS.**

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
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COOPERATING.

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**BOYS' AND GIRLS' CLUB WORK.****PREPARING HOME-CANNED VEGETABLES FOR THE TABLE.**

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[This circular is a part of the series of follow-up instructions used in the home canning club work in the Northern and Western States, the complete series including NR-21, NR-22, NR-23, NR-24, NR-25, NR-26, NR-29, and NR-30.]

Fresh vegetables and fruits are important parts of the diet. They contain, to be sure, far more water, pound for pound, than most other common food materials do and can not, therefore, be depended upon to supply any other material in very large quantities. They contribute something to the body's supply of protein needed for body-building purposes and even more to its supply of fuel. Their chief usefulness, however, is in providing certain very important substances which are needed only in very small quantities. These substances include mild acids and fiber, both of which tend to promote good digestion by preventing constipation, and a very large variety of mineral matters which, like protein, serve as body builders and have besides a very large number of other uses. They include also vitamins, which are too newly discovered to be thoroughly understood, but which are supposed to play an important part by promoting growth during youth and bodily well-being throughout life.

Vegetables and fruits owe part of their usefulness to the very fact that they are watery and therefore refreshing, and to the very large number of pleasing flavors which they contribute to the diet.

The amounts of fruits and vegetables and of meat, eggs, and similar foods in the diet should bear some relation to each other, the general rule being that the greater the amount of meat and similar foods the greater the amount of fruits and vegetables needed.

Though from the standpoint of diet fruits and vegetables may be classed together, from the standpoint of bill-of-fare making, or the planning of foods into pleasing meals, they may be divided into two groups. Fruits are more often used for desserts or as appetizers at the beginning of meals, while vegetables are served in the form of soups and salads and as accompaniments to meat at dinner, or combined with some of the more substantial food materials, such as milk, eggs, or cereals, as meat substitutes at lunch or supper.

Some of the valuable mineral matters of vegetables come out in the water in which they are cooked. When vegetables, therefore, are limited in amount, the juice should be saved and used in soup making or in other ways. When fruits and vegetables are abundant in the diet, this is a matter of less importance. Then, too, it is worth remembering that, if they are carefully covered, it is possible to cook some vegetables, like spinach, in so little water that none remains to be poured off before serving.

To most people fresh vegetables, just out of the garden, taste best when cooked by the very simplest methods, that is, by being steamed, boiled, or baked, and served with a little salt and butter or cream. These simple methods are especially desirable when young children or sick people are to be served. Nor should anything which has been said here be taken as recommending the more elaborate methods for general use.

It sometimes happens that canned vegetables, even those which have been prepared according to the best methods, lack the flavor of fresh vegetables and, under these circum-



stances, the addition of a new flavoring may be desirable. Canned peas which have lost some of their original flavor may, to the taste of many people, be improved by adding a very little chopped mint, either fresh or dried, a practice common in Great Britain even with fresh peas.

Another very general way of introducing variety in flavor is by the use of onion. This may be added in form of juice or in the form of finely chopped onion, cooked until tender in butter or other fat and water. After the onion is soft, the water may be cooked away and the onion very slightly browned. This way of preparing onion is a good substitute for the common practice of preparing it for flavoring purposes by frying it in fat alone, for by the latter method it is likely to be burned and spoiled in flavor. Canned spinach, kale, Swiss chard, peas, lima beans, or carrots may be warmed up with a little onion so prepared instead of being prepared according to the more common method of heating in a little butter or other fat, or simply in their own juice.

Canned peas may be served with leaves of lettuce, cut up into small pieces, cooked in butter and water as directed for the preparation of the onion. This is a good way to use the larger and tougher leaves of lettuce. A combination of onion and lettuce may be used in this way, and either one or both may be used to flavor carrots or turnips.

For lima beans, curry powder makes a good flavoring when used in small amounts, either with or without onion cooked as above. One-fourth level teaspoonful is about the right amount for a quart can of beans. It is very desirable not to use too large an amount, for curry powder is a flavoring material which has great value if used judiciously, but of which one is likely to tire if it is carelessly used.

Another way of flavoring lima beans is by means of pimientos or Spanish peppers, now so commonly grown in the South and not uncommon elsewhere. One pimiento, either fresh or canned, is enough for a quart can of beans.

#### RECIPES TO BE USED FOR CANNED VEGETABLES.

##### CANNED PEAS FLAVORED WITH ONION.

1 tablespoonful of very finely chopped onion.	$\frac{1}{4}$ cupful of water.
2 level tablespoonfuls of butter.	1-pint can of peas.
	Salt and pepper.

Cook the onion in the butter and water until very tender. Let the water cook away, but do not let the onion or butter burn. Drain the peas and heat them with the cooked onion.

##### CURRIED LIMA BEANS.

1 level tablespoonful of very finely chopped onion.	1-pint can lima beans.
2 level tablespoonfuls of butter.	$\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoonful of curry powder.
	Salt.

Proceed as above.

##### LIMA BEANS WITH PIMIENTO AND ONION.

For the curry powder in the above recipe substitute one-half a pimiento finely chopped. If the pimiento is raw, remove the seeds, chop, and fry the remainder with the onion in the butter.

##### LIMA BEANS IN TOMATO SAUCE.

1 tablespoonful of butter or very finely chopped bacon.	$\frac{1}{2}$ cupful of thick tomato juice (strained).
1 tablespoonful of very finely chopped onion.	1-pint can of lima beans.
$\frac{1}{4}$ cupful of water.	Salt.
	Pepper.

Cook the onion in the butter and water until very tender; or, cook the chopped bacon and then add the water and onion and cook until the onion is soft. Add the tomato juice and the beans. Heat and season with salt and pepper.

## SPINACH, KALE, AND SWISS CHARD IN SOUP MAKING.

The following soups may be prepared from canned spinach, kale, or chard:

## SPINACH MILK SOUP.

1 cup of canned spinach, finely chopped or put through a sieve.	1½ teaspoonfuls of salt.
⅓ teaspoonful of soda.	Pepper.
6 cups of milk (whole or skim) or a mixture of milk with water or meat stock.	If desired—
4 tablespoonfuls of butter or other fat.	1 small onion.
2 tablespoonfuls of flour.	1 tablespoonful of lemon juice or vinegar.
	1 teaspoonful of sugar.

*Method of preparing, No. 1 (the quicker way).*—Chop the spinach in a meat chopper, using the finest cutter. If the chopper is at once rinsed off it is easily cleaned, and so its use does not involve much work. Or, if preferred, put the spinach through a sieve, first cooking it till tender, if necessary. Make a thin white sauce by heating the flour in the butter and adding the milk, stirring constantly. Add the spinach, soda, salt, and pepper, and also the lemon juice or vinegar and sugar, if these are used. Then reheat.

*Method of preparing, No. 2.*—Chop the onion and the spinach. Cook the onion in butter and a little water until tender and then add the spinach and soda. Cook a few minutes, stir the flour into the spinach mixture, stirring constantly, and then add the milk and other ingredients and reheat.

## SPINACH EGG SOUP.

1 cup of canned spinach.	4 egg yolks.
1 small onion.	1½ teaspoonfuls of salt.
⅓ teaspoonful of soda.	Pepper.
¼ cup of butter or other fat.	1 tablespoonful of lemon juice or vinegar, if desired.
Water enough to make a quart of soup.	
1 large slice of bread or 6 soda crackers.	

Cut the onion into small pieces and cook it with the spinach and soda in the butter for a few minutes. Add the bread (or the crackers) and a quart of hot water; cook slowly for an hour. Strain, season, add more water if necessary to make a quart of soup, and thicken it with the egg yolks, being careful not to let it curdle. To avoid this add a little of the hot soup cautiously to the yolks before putting the yolks into the larger amount of soup. Two whole eggs may be used in place of the egg yolks, but they do not make so smooth a soup. Milk may be used in place of part of the water and less egg may be used.

## KALE, SPINACH, AND CHARD AS A VEGETABLE TO SERVE WITH MEAT.

One of the chief points to be kept in mind in cooking these vegetables for this purpose is that they may be spoiled by being overcooked. Twenty-five or thirty minutes is enough for the fresh vegetables. When the vegetable has been canned, it has already been cooked, and so in preparing it for the table it needs to be heated only long enough to make it very hot and to mix it well with the seasoning, etc., added to it. Five minutes will usually be enough.

The simplest way to prepare canned spinach and other greens is to heat and season with pepper, salt, and butter. Or the butter may be omitted and oil and vinegar may be put on at the table. Sometimes the spinach is chopped and then reheated. Or it may be heated with finely chopped onion which has been cooked in butter and water.

## CHOPPED SPINACH THICKENED WITH FLOUR.

1 12-ounce can of spinach.	½ cupful of milk or cream.
2 tablespoonfuls of butter.	Salt and pepper.
1 tablespoonful of flour.	



Cook the spinach; melt the butter, add the flour, and mix them thoroughly. Add the spinach and cook about five minutes. Add the milk and seasoning and reheat, stirring constantly to prevent burning.

#### SPINACH WITH TOAST.

Chopped spinach, prepared in any of the above ways, is often served with hard-boiled eggs and with buttered toast, or with bread which has been buttered and heated in the oven until brown.

#### BAKED OMELET WITH GREENS.

The following recipe for baked omelet with greens was made especially for using with a 12-ounce jar of kale. Since it contains four eggs, it is more nourishing than greens cooked in other ways. It may be served with ham, bacon, or smoked meat. Or a half cupful of meat or chicken, cut into small pieces, may be added to the ingredients. Another good way to serve it is with meat cut into small pieces and warmed up in gravy or white sauce.

1½ cupfuls of finely chopped greens (12-ounce can).	¾ cupful of liquid (milk, cream, water, soup stock, vegetable juice, or mixture of two or more of these).
¼ cupful of butter.	⅛ teaspoonful of pepper.
⅓ cupful of flour.	1 teaspoonful of lemon juice or vinegar.
4 eggs.	
1 teaspoonful of salt.	

Chop the kale very fine, using a meat chopper if possible. Melt the butter, add the flour, and cook about one minute. Add the milk, stirring constantly, and cook until the mixture is smooth and thick. Add the chopped greens and the egg yolks unbeaten, and the seasoning. Beat the whites of the eggs stiff. Add them to the other mixture by the cutting and folding process. Pour into a butter baking pan and cook 30 minutes in a slow oven or until firm and brown. Serve at once.

Some canned greens may have more water than others. From the 12-ounce can of kale used in this recipe 1½ cupfuls of chopped kale was obtained from which little liquid could be pressed. In making soufflés of this kind the vegetable should be measured quite dry, and any liquid which can be drained off may be used to make up the three-fourths of a cup of liquid.

NOTE.—These instructions were prepared especially for use as a winter study in connection with the Boys' and Girls' Canning Clubs and Mother-Daughter Home Canning Clubs of the Northern, Central, and Western States, with the hope that members will be encouraged to make a definite study of the best methods for the use of home-canned food products.

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